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MONDAY, APRIL 27TH, 1857.

JAMES HENTHORN TODD, D.D., PRESIDENT,
in the Chair.

ON the recommendation of the Council the following Resolutions were adopted by the Academy.

1. That the several Committees of the Council shall hold seven stated meetings annually, one in each of the months of January, February, March, April, May, June, and November; and that attendance on such meetings shall reckon as attendance at the meetings of the Council; and that the number of attendances requisite to qualify a member of Council for re-election be increased from seven to ten. The attendances of a Member not to be reckoned on two Committees.

The Committees intended by the foregoing recommendation are, Science, Polite Literature, Antiquities, Economy, and Library.

2. To require from the Treasurer, on his appointment, solvent security to the amount of £2000 sterling, in the form of a bond, for the faithful discharge of his office.

Mr. M. Donovan read a paper on a new and singular Acoustic Phenomenon.

Professor Stoney exhibited and described a new arrangement of "Grove's Battery."

The Rev. Samuel Haughton stated that, at the request of the Council of the Academy, he was about to lay before them a short statement of the circumstances connected with the expedition to the neighbourhood of the Magnetic Pole, about to leave England, under the command of their countryman,

Captain F. L. M'Clintock, R. N. This gallant officer had offered his services to Lady Jane Franklin, in a manner which was as disinterested as it was chivalrous. Every person who had the honour of this officer's acquaintance would bear testimony to the high value of the services he had already rendered to his country and to science, during the three Arctic expeditions in search of Sir John Franklin, in which he had already assisted: first, under the command of Sir James Ross, in 1848-9; secondly, under the orders of Captain Austin, in 1850-51; and thirdly, in command of the screw steamer, *Intrepid*, in company with the *Resolute*, commanded by Captain Kellett, in 1852-3. A short account of these expeditions had been recently laid by Captain M'Clintock before the Royal Dublin Society, in whose Museum were deposited the valuable zoological and geological specimens collected by him during the period of the expeditions.

As was now well known, all these and other searching expeditions had taken too northerly a direction, and the locality of Sir John Franklin's ships was now ascertained to lie within narrow limits, easily reached in a single year. Notwithstanding repeated applications in Parliament and elsewhere, the Admiralty had decided on not prosecuting any further search for the *Erebus* and *Terror*; and, under these circumstances, it remained for Lady Franklin to decide what steps she would herself take in the matter. She did not hesitate a moment; and decided on sending out her own expedition, although probably at a cost ruinous to an individual. She purchased the late Sir Richard Sutton's screw schooner yacht, built with diagonal planking, and thankfully availed herself of Captain M'Clintock's generous offer to take the command of her expedition. The manner in which the offer was made by him, and accepted by her, is highly creditable to both, and is a circumstance of which M'Clintock's countrymen may well feel proud.

Mr. Haughton then read the following letter received by him on Friday last from Captain M'Clintock :—

“ The Admiralty have just granted me leave of absence for the purpose of conducting Lady Franklin's expedition. I regret not being able to hear your paper on Monday evening, but offer my sincere thanks for the helping hand you are giving us. I am now in a position which requires that I should offer my personal thanks to you. Within the last four days an address to the Admiralty has arrived from several influential New York people, requesting that the *Resolute* might be placed at the disposal of Lady Franklin.”

It was generally understood that Lord Palmerston was personally favourable to the granting of Government aid to Lady Franklin's expedition, and the request of the New York merchants afforded the ground for making a definite request, viz., that the *Resolute* should be fitted out and provisioned at once, so as to sail with Lady Franklin's schooner.

Mr. Haughton then proceeded to state in detail the reasons why the Royal Irish Academy should address the Government on this important question, and explained the advantages to geographical and geological science which had already been the result of the preceding searching expeditions. In giving these reasons, Mr. Haughton said that he purposely abstained from mentioning other than purely scientific grounds, as he thought that the Royal Irish Academy, in this matter, was bound to consider only the results to science likely to result from Lady Franklin's search, if successful ; and the risk of human life involved in the proposed search. Professor Haughton's statement, was illustrated by reference to a map of the Arctic Regions, and to Captain M'Clintock's paper on the three expeditions on which he had already served. The following is a brief summary of the points dwelt on by Professor Haughton :—

1st. It was highly probable, in the opinion of those competent to judge, that the *Erebus* and *Terror* were still in ex-

istence ; and, if so, it was nearly certain that near them would be found buried copies of Sir John Franklin and Captain Crozier's Journals, and of the scientific observations made before the crews perished, which would prove of the highest scientific value.

2nd. The locality in which the Erebus and Terror lie is easily reached, is circumscribed within narrow limits, and is in the neighbourhood of the North Magnetic Pole, which is looked upon with such interest by scientific observers. The extent of coast-line already traversed by the Government searching expeditions is 6500 miles. There remain to be discovered only 370 miles. The total number of miles traversed by sledges in the former expeditions was 44,000 miles. An expedition consisting of 100 persons might be expected to traverse from 7000 to 10,000 miles, with sledges, in a single year.

3rd. The rate of mortality for all the Arctic expeditions since 1818 (exclusive of the missing expedition) is *under* $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum, for which, and other reasons, Arctic service is extremely popular both with officers and men.

4th. It is not necessary for the complete exploration of the area described (see chart) to penetrate so far as to risk the detention of the vessels by the ice. In the event of involuntary detention, or accident to the ships, the crews can easily escape over the ice, with sledges and boats, either to the whalers, or to one of the three great depôts of provisions stored up at Port Leopold, Beechey Island, and Melville Island. In this manner the crews of Sir Edward Belcher's ships were withdrawn from their vessels, not of necessity, but in compliance with *Admiralty orders* ; their crews being in good health, and another year's provisions remaining.

5th. Such danger to the ships of being crushed as exists, is annually encountered by the whalers ; and out of thirty vessels employed in the late searches, only one (Breadalbane) was

lost by ice-crushing. She was only a merchant ship employed to carry provisions; she had not been strengthened like the searching vessels, and had been kept in a most exposed and perilous position for fourteen days previous to the accident. This occurred near Beechey Island, where, had she been docked in the ice, in conformity with the usual practice, she would have been saved.

6th. The scientific results of the previous searching expeditions have not been made public by the Admiralty. Tide observations, magnetical and meteorological observations of the highest interest and value, were made during those expeditions; and it is manifestly unfair to decry the scientific results of those expeditions, when no opportunity of judging of them has been afforded to the scientific public, who alone are competent to judge of their value.

7th. The commercial value of previous Arctic explorations may be judged of by the following facts:—

1. Sir H. Gilbert's discovery of the Cod Fishery of Newfoundland.
2. Davis—Great Whale Fishery of West Greenland.
3. Hudson—Hudson's Bay and the Great Fur Company.
4. Sir John Ross—Whale Fishery of the north and north-west of Baffin's Bay.
5. Parry—Whale Fishery of Lancaster Sound, Barrow Strait, and Prince Regent's Inlet.
6. Beechey—Whale Fishery of Bhering's Straits. In this Fishery, in the space of two years the American whalers obtained cargoes amounting to eight million dollars in value.

8th. Lady Franklin's expedition affords the last hope of the discovery of a practicable north-west passage. Collinson's voyage has proved that the northern coast of the American continent can be safely navigated for an extent of 1400 miles east and west; and if there be a north-west passage at all, it must exist in the area proposed to be searched for the Erebus

and Terror. It has been already proved by the set of the tides that there is a water communication in this area.

It is proposed by Captain M'Clintock to make his way down Prince Regent's Inlet, and thence through Bellot's Strait, into the field of search ; or to attack it directly, if the ice permits, by going down Peel Sound, which he has good reasons for believing to be a strait. If prevented by the ice from passing through Bellot's Strait, or going down Peel Strait, he will abandon the idea of taking the ship through the supposed north-west passage, and, leaving her in safety in Prince Regent's Inlet, will proceed to make the requisite search for the Erebus and Terror by sledging parties, so successfully used in the late expeditions, and in conducting which Captain M'Clintock particularly distinguished himself.

Professor Haughton concluded his statement by proposing the following Resolution:—

“ That an Address be forwarded by the President, in the name of the Royal Irish Academy, to Lord Palmerston, praying him to give the consent of her Majesty's Government to the use of the Resolute by Lady Franklin's expedition, and of such Government stores as may be requisite for the full and efficient equipment of that expedition.”

This Resolution was seconded by the Right Hon. Joseph Napier, M.P. for the University of Dublin, and carried unanimously by a crowded meeting, which appeared to take the liveliest interest in the success of the expedition.

Sir. W. R. Hamilton, LL. D., moved, and W. R. Wilde, Esq., seconded, the following Resolution, which was also adopted:—

“ That the Seal of the Academy be affixed to the Address.”

A ballot having taken place to supply the two vacancies in the Council, caused by the death of the late Treasurer, Robert

Ball, LL. D., and by the resignation of the Rev. J. H. Jellett, on the Committee of Polite Literature, the President declared that the Rev. J. H. Jellett had been placed on the Committee of Science, and that the Rev. Joseph Carson, D. D., had been named on the Committee of Polite Literature.

Dr. Apjohn having inquired of the President if he knew of any objection to the Academy proceeding at once to the election of Treasurer, and Secretary of the Council, and having been informed by the President that he was not aware of any By-Law of the Academy to prevent such election,—he moved, and John Francis Waller, LL. D., seconded, the following Resolution :—

“That the Academy do elect the Rev. Dr. Carson, Treasurer; and the Rev J. H. Jellett, Secretary of the Council.”

As an amendment it was moved by Sir W. R. Hamilton, LL. D., and seconded by George Petrie, LL. D.:—

“That the Academy do adjourn the election of a Treasurer until the next night of meeting.”

A division having been called for, it appeared that, exclusive of the tellers, twenty-one voted for, and twenty-eight against, the amendment.

The original Resolution having been proposed by the President, it was moved by John E. Pigot, Esq., and seconded by R. R. Madden, M. D.:—

“That the Academy do now adjourn.”

The amendment having been negatived, the President put the original resolution, which was adopted.

A ballot having been called for, the President declared that the Rev. J. H. Jellett had been re-elected Secretary to the Council, and that the Rev. Joseph Carson, D. D., had been elected Treasurer to the Academy.

The Academy then adjourned.